

Preserving Forest Grove

Newsletter of the Historic Landmarks Board

How About That Ceiling?

by

Margie Waltz-Actor

Have you ever been on a tour in a historic neighborhood and viewed an old house with a plain, ordinary, uninspiring ceiling? As you scrutinized the bare vacuum of white plaster didn't you wonder why the new owners did not choose to decorate or adorn the ceilings with classic wood moldings, textures or medallions? Of course, cost has always limited what happens to ceilings. Even though many old houses with tall ceilings were built with beautiful expensive moldings, there were (and still are) ways to inexpensively decorate the plain canvas of your ceilings in your old house.

First, let the height and style of your ceilings guide and direct your design. Taller ceilings from nine to twelve feet offer more opportunities. But do not discount low ceilings as impossible to formalize.

If you have low unadorned ceilings throughout your house try adding crown

molding and a rope swag which could blend with the crown molding. Another option is to add crown molding and a grouping of elements which all fit together but do not overwhelm the ceiling space. A fi-

nal touch to any ceiling is the addition of a ceiling medallion in the center and a decorative light or chandelier. If you like to shop on the internet you can find vendors who offer hundreds of choices with respect to ceiling medallions, ceiling coverings (such as pressed tin) and ceiling lighting.



Decorative ceiling example. Photo courtesy of Hyde Park Mouldings

Tall ceilings, of course, offer a broader range of opportunities to formalize any room. Traditional and classic box and beam ceilings made of dark stained or painted wood always directs the eye upward. Inside the rectangles and squares created by the boxes and beams, try adding a small crown molding, pressed tin or plaster texturing. Another option for texturing a tall ceiling is to use painted

or stained bead board coupled with crown molding on the ceiling edges.

Paint, texturing, and even wallpaper can get eyes to look upward. Changing the ceiling paint color from the wall color can add great diversity to a room. Darker ceiling colors make a room smaller, whereas lighter colors on a ceiling can make a room larger. Texturing a flat plain ceiling adds warmth, depth and formality to any room.

Traditionally, texturing was done with plaster. Today, a sheetrock contractor can come into your home and texture ceilings with a number of different styles or textures. Don't forget wallpaper. Yes, wallpaper on the ceiling. Wallpaper patterns, textures and colors can be used to class up any ceiling. Handling wallpaper upside down is a challenge for even the pros to install. Make sure if you choose to use wallpaper on the ceiling you have a contractor who is experienced in overhead applications.

Don't forget the lighting. Lighting plays an important role in any renovation, but it is critical for accenting a ceiling. To add a touch of class to that grand room with tall ceilings consider a beautiful chandelier. Or, use flush mounted canned lighting in smaller rooms for a subtler effect. Without adequate light, your fabulous texture or paint treatment will be lost in the shadows.

As you plan your renovation, look beyond your four walls to that large space overhead. Warm paint, textured wallpaper, thick molding and medallions are just a few of the decorative touches that can turn ordinary ceilings into artistic masterpieces.

2008 Eric Stewart Award Announced

The Eric G. Stewart Award is presented by the Historic Landmarks Board to recognize outstanding service and support of historic preservation in Forest Grove. This year the Board is presenting the award to Mike and Brian McMenamin.

The McMenamin brothers are being recognized for their efforts not only to preserve the Grand Lodge, but also for adapting the building to a new use without significantly altering it. A Forest Grove landmark since the 1920s, it is now a popular destination for both residents and tourists alike.

To recognize the contributions that Mike and Brian McMenamin have made to this community and in celebration of National Historic Preservation Month, the Mayor will present the award at the May 27 City Council meeting.



The McMenamin brothers' Grand Lodge, Forest Grove, Oregon



\$10,000 Grant Awarded

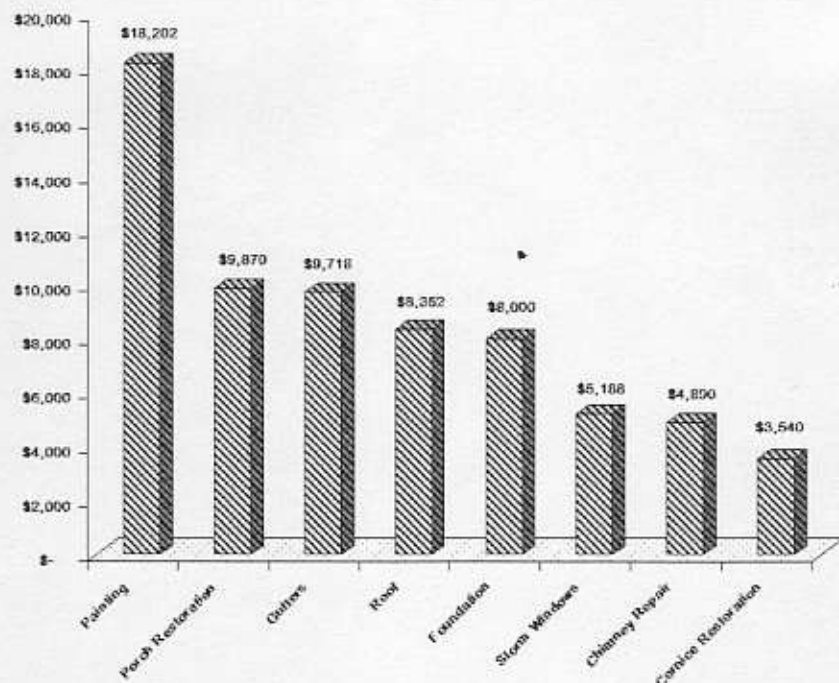
The City has just been informed that it has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the State Historic Preservation Office. This grant will be used to hire a consultant to update the information collected on the Walker's and Naylor's additions (located north and west of downtown) in 1998. The Board anticipates applying for another grant next year, which would use the updated information to prepare a National Register Historic District nomination in 2009-10. If successful, this neighborhood, including these homes (left) along "A" Street, could become the third nationally-recognized district in Forest Grove.

Grant Money Well Spent

The Historic Landmarks Board has been awarding grants since 1997. Detailed records have been kept as to what kind of projects the Board funds. We thought it would be interesting to analyze these projects in terms of project category, e.g., foundation, roof work, etc. The

project category that received the most funding in the last eleven years turned out to be painting. Most of these painting projects occurred on houses whose exteriors had been somewhat neglected and were showing patches of bare wood. The second most funded project was porch restoration (see graph at right for a complete breakdown). Remember, if you have a restoration project, we would love to help.

Top 1997-2007 Historic Landmark Board Projects: Total Dollars Granted



The Forest Grove Historic Landmarks Board Grant Program

Is your house on our local register? If it is, did you know that your house is eligible for restoration / rehabilitation grant funding? The Historic Landmarks Board has funds to help you with your projects. If you are planning any exterior restoration work such as restoring architectural features or if you have structural work to do such a foundation repair, we'd love to help. We fund projects up to 50% of the cost of the job per grant. Come see us! We can also help you find historically appropriate solutions to any problems you may have.

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